

Message Text

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ACTION SS-25

INFO OCT-01 ADP-00 SSO-00 NSCE-00 /026 W

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FM AMEMBASSY SAIGON

TO SECSTATE WASHDC IMMEDIATE 3677

S E C R E T SAIGON 11376

EXDIS

E. O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: MOPS MARR VS

SUBJECT: ICCS DECLINES TO PASS MR 2 ULTIMATUM TO NVA/ VC

FOLLOWING SENT ACTION SAIGON FROM NHA TRANG JUNE 24

REPEATED TO YOU

QUOTE NHA TRANG 0637

REF: NHA TRANG 0635 AND 0636

1. KONTUM CANDEL RETURNED FROM PLEIKU AFTERNOON JUNE 24 WITH
ICCS REPLY TO GVN TPJMT REQUEST THAT MR 2 COMMANDER' S ULTIMATUM
BE TRANSMITTED TO PRG. IN ITS REPLY, ICCS SAYS THAT IT CANNOT
IN GOOD FAITH USE ITS GOOD OFFICES TO DELIVER A MESSAGE THAT
IS IN FACT AN ULTIMATUM. REPLY GOES ON TO SAY THAT, WHILE
ICCS RECOGNIZES GVN' S ESSENTIALLY DEFENSIVE POSTURE IN THE
TRUNG NGHIA FIGHTING, IT REALIZES TOO THAT WHAT GVN PROPOSES
(IF ITS CONDITIONS ARE NOT MET) IS OFFENSIVE ACTION NOT IN
KEEPING WITH SPIRIT OF PARIS AGREEMENT. IN LIGHT OF THESE
CIRCUMSTANCES, ICCS RESPECTFULLY DECLINES GVN REQUEST TO
CONVEY ULTIMATUM TO PRG.

2. REPLY IS BEING TRANSLATED INTO VIETNAMESE IN KONTUM AND
WILL BE DELIVERED TO GVN TPJMT CHIEF THERE MORNING OF
JUNE 25. REPLY WAS DRAFTED BY REGION III CANDEL IN PLEIKU AND
WAS REPORTEDLY ACCEPTED WITH LITTLE ARGUMENT BY OTHER THREE
DELEGATIONS THERE. REPLY WILL BEAR SIGNATURE OF SENIOR

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HUNGDEL IN KONTUM, WHO TOOK OVER TODAY AS CHAIRMAN. (KONTUM POLOFF BELIEVES THAT DECISION WAS TAKEN BY THE REGION III DELEGATIONS WITH, AT LEAST IN CANDEL CASE, NO MORE THAN GENERAL GUIDANCE FROM SAIGON HQ.)

3. WE ARE AGAIN REDUCED TO SPECULATING, THIS TIME ABOUT GVN'S REACTIONS AND NEXT MOVES. WE DOUBT THAT GENERALS TOAN AND CAM ANTICIPATED ICCS REFUSAL TO TRANSMIT THE MESSAGE OR WILL WELCOME THE ICCS DECISION, EVEN IT PROVIDES THEM AN OPPORTUNITY TO GET OFF THE HOOK; STAFF OFFICERS OF 23 RD DIV WITH WHOM POLOFF SPOKE LATE AFTERNOON OF JUNE 23 WERE ENTIRELY SERIOUS ABOUT THE ULTIMATUM, AND SO WAS DIVISION COMMANDER, BGEN TRAN VAN CAM, THIS MORNING. FURTHERMORE, WE MUST ASSUME THAT NVA/ VC IN AREA KNOW OF ULTIMATUM IN ANY CASE, THANKS TO THE POLGARIANS.

4. MEANWHILE, THE SORT OF ACTION AGAINST WHICH TOAN AND CAM WARNED IN PART (B) OF THEIR ULTIMATUM TOOK PLACE THIS AFTERNOON: ENEMY FIRED FOUR 122- MM ROCKETS INTO CAMP KNOWN AS B-15, FORMER US SPECIAL FORCES INSTALLATION ABOUT ONE KILOMETER SOUTH OF KONTUM CITY ON QL-14. (NO WORD YET ON CASUALTIES OR DAMAGE.)

5. IN CONTINUING FIGHTING AT TRUNG NGHIA TODAY, GVN MADE HEAVY USE OF AIR AND ARTILLERY (IN EXCESS OF 1500 ROUNDS) BUT APPARENTLY MADE NO FORWARD PROGRESS; IN FACT, 1 ST BN OF 44 TH REGT AT EASTERN EDGE OF VILLAGE CAME UNDER ATTACK THIS MORNING, TOOK MODERATE CASUALTIES, AND MAY IN FACT HAVE RETREATED A SHORT DISTANCE. THE BATTALION FROM THE 45 TH REGT OPERATING TO NORTH OF TRUNG NGHIA ALSO HAD SEVERAL CONTACTS AND TOOK LIGHT CASUALTIES. SIGNED TEARE UNQUOTE
WHITEHOUSE

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